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Memorandum of Conversation

MVW
USDEL MC/17

DATE: March 21, 1959
Time: 2:30 p.m.
Place: Camp David

SUBJECT: Contingency Planning for Berlin

US
PARTICIPANTS: The President
The Acting Secretary
Mr. Quarles
Mr. Murphy
General Twining
Mr. Merchant
Ambassador Whitney
COPIES TO: Mr. Reinhardt
Mr. Irwin
General Goodpaster
Major Eisenhower

UK
Prime Minister Macmillan
Foreign Secretary Lloyd
Sir Frederick Eoyer-Millar
Ambassador Caccia
Sir Norman Brook
Sir Patrick Dean
Sir Anthony Rumbold
Mr. Bishop

COPIES TO: W -Mr.Dillon S/P-Mr.Smith
S/S - 2 G-Mr.Murphy EUR-Mr.Merchant
C-Mr.Reinhardt L-Mr.Becker
IO-Mr.Wilcox

Amb London-Amb.Whitney Secy McElroy
Amb Bonn-Amb.Bruce Gen.Twining
US Mission Berlin-Mr.Gufler Mr. Irwin
Amb Paris-Amb.Houghton Allen Dulles
USRO -Amb.Purgess

At the President's request, Mr. Irwin outlined the United States contingency plans as presently conceived. Whereupon the President asked whether the British were doing anything comparable. The Prime Minister's There followed a discussion of the best locus for developing tripartite planning in this connection. Mr. Quarles referred to the fact that we had sent a team of qualified people to "ride the Autobahn" and report the actual facts of the present situation with respect to Soviet and East German procedures so that we might have a completely accurate picture.

There followed a discussion as to what would constitute interference or obstruction to our access to Berlin. Mr. Quarles observed that the military were awaiting precise instructions on this point.

Mr. Murphy noted that the problem really came with the stamping of documents, which was something to which we would not agree.

The President said we agreed that we should show papers for the purpose of identification, that we found the issue

of stamping

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E.O. 12356, SEC. 13 (a)(3)(5)
NSC Letter 12/3/56

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of stamping more difficult. The Acting Secretary stressed the value of a forthright announcement of our position both as to our juridical rights and what we intended to do as a practical matter immediately upon any Soviet handover to the GDR or the signature of a treaty between them and the Soviet Government.

Mr. Irwin said that a problem for contingency planning was whether you went to the United Nations after the first refusal by GDR authorities to let your traffic through on the old basis or whether you tried a second probe to see whether they would support that refusal by force; in other words, whether one wished to create the symbol of force before going to the United Nations or wished to go there before such a symbol of force had been created.

The President said that the Foreign Ministers should be instructed to ascertain what the Soviets really intended to do. He also pointed out that if we were to take any positive action such as blockading the Dardanelles and the Baltic, we would have to have public opinion with us.



Cleared by: Mr. Merchant

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